



Habitat Goal Implementation Team Spring 2021 Meeting Minutes May 4th-5th, 2021

All meeting materials can be accessed [here](#)

DAY 1: Tuesday, May 4th 1 pm – 4:30 pm

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|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Bill Jenkins | Christine Conn | Chris Guy | Megan Ossmann |
| Ben Lewis | David Maginnes | Kristin Saunders | Briana Yancy |
| Bo Williams | Steve Faulkner | Greg Allen | Will Parson |
| Jake Glass | Becky Golden | Julie Reichert-Nguyen | Mary Andrews |
| Laura Cattell Noll | Tuana Phillips | Scott Phillips | Justin Shapiro |
| Kevin DuBois | Julie Devers | Joel Carr | Paige Hobough |
| Katie Ombalski | Clint Morgeson | Jennifer Starr | Mike Bednarski |
| Denise Clearwater | Alison Santoro | Dan Murphy | Brooke Landry |
| Pam Mason | Jeff Trollinger | Gina Hunt | |

Welcome and Introductions

HGIT Co-chairs, Bill Jenkins (EPA) and Christine Conn (MD DNR)

- Living Resource Data Manager position was proposed by the HGIT to help with more accurate tracking of wetlands, black duck, and brook trout outcomes.
 - The proposal was accepted by the MB and put into EPA's budget request - we are still waiting to hear if it has been approved
- Christine Conn is stepping down as HGIT co-chair after 5 years in the role. A replacement has been nominated and will be announced after approval from the HGIT workgroup chairs

Habitat Goal Team Fall 2020 Action Plan

Habitat GIT Coordinator, Chris Guy (USFWS)

- After the fall 2020 meeting we drafted an Action Plan based on the discussions that took place, designed to serve the workgroups, and guide our actions as a steering committee.
- Priorities:
 - Social Science and Ecosystem Services
 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ)
 - Shallow water habitat
 - Warm water stressors in streams
 - Urban opportunities
- We would like to hear your feedback on this document and if these priorities are still accurate.

Questions/comments:

- Kevin DuBois: When we worked on a WWG product to develop a factsheet to highlight the value of wetlands, the communications workgroup was helpful in organizing our thoughts and providing guidance on how to target the message towards the public. I would encourage you to utilize them as you integrate social science into your work.
- Several participants indicated that they have not seen the action plan or did not have a chance to review. **Megan will send a follow up email with the action plan attached after the meeting.**

Update from Christine on GIT funding project

- Project in partnership with the Healthy Watersheds GIT focused on trying to figure out what makes collaborative networks among technical service providers work, and what the keys to success are.
- We've completed 3 workshops (1 in PA, 1 in VA, 1 in MD) and are starting to pull together the results.

Chesapeake WILD

Dan Murphy (USFWS)

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Dan Murphy with questions: dan_murphy@fws.gov

Questions/comments:

- Kevin DuBois: Thank you for mentioning the potential for partnering with REPI. You are probably aware, but the Sentinel Landscape Partnership Program would be another good fit to leverage funds.
 - Dan Murphy: My office has worked with the REPI program in the middle Chesapeake sentinel landscape. We just submitted a NAWCA grant proposal for a large project near Fishing Bay.
- Kevin DuBois: Did you support the development of the new proposed VA Security Corridors Sentinel Landscape designation?
 - Yes, the folks in my program on the planning group have been involved.

- Scott Phillips: What are some of the ideas you have for science coordination? Science partners, such as USGS, and others in STAR could help.
 - Dan Murphy: I haven't thought much about this yet, mainly because I am focused on implementation. Mike Slattery would have all kinds of information about this topic, I suggest you reach out to him.
- Bill Jenkins: Have you thought about how much of the budget would go for science vs. implementation?
 - Dan Murphy: One of the good things about this program is that it will fund monitoring and capacity development for organizations that are working throughout the watershed, in addition to implementation. Right now we have a pretty good start in the planning and design of a landscape-scale conservation and restoration project because of all the work that the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership has done with the Chesapeake Conservation Atlas, but it is going to be a work in progress over time. Especially when it comes to climate change, we will need more information to help us address that pillar of the program.
- Kevin: The VA Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework is trying to understand all potential funding partners for projects with resilience co-benefits. Are they aware of your program?
 - Dan Murphy: Probably – the Department of Environmental Resources has been heavily involved in providing input into the development of the framework of this program. I'm not sure if the coastal zone folks are directly involved, but coordination is happening with the state of VA about this program.

At-Risk Species presentation

Tony Tur (USFWS)

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Tony Tur with any questions: anthony_tur@fws.gov:

Questions/comments:

- Chris Guy: I want to tie a couple things together between the last two presentations, as well as with the work the HGIT does and will be doing over the next few years. Tony just explained the social science aspect of how FWS is paying more attention to what people want and what they relate to. This is a good example of how we do our own work, such focusing on aquatic connectivity and fish passage (i.e. Chesapeake logperch) because it has a lot of bang for buck. We're going to be talking about these ideas more and more over the next few years.
- Katie Ombalski: Are these species that will be the focus for funding with Chesapeake WILD?
 - Tony Tur: They will likely be a focus. This has been the case for the Delaware priorities and will probably translate to the whole Chesapeake as well.

Feasibility/Outcome Attainment Assessment

Christine Conn (MD DNR)

- Conversations at the MB level led by Sean Corson about how we are likely to not reach some of our outcomes by 2025, including some TMDL goals.
- Formed an ad-hoc team to identify the outcomes with a quantifiable goal and indicators that are tracking the goal – which outcomes are not attainable and which ones do we not have enough information?
 - Buffers, stream health, brook trout, black duck, wetlands
- Decided to take a step back and use the biennial SRS meeting to revisit this issue

Questions/comments:

- Mary Andrews: We need more investment - you can't have outcomes with no resources to meet them. Fish passage was so successful because resources were given directly from the Bay Program (actual bodies to work on FP). That's no longer the case but it set the tone for success. Many WGs have very few resources at hand.
 - Kevin DuBois: I want to echo Mary's comments. Resources are limited, but when GIT funding is prioritized, the TMDL gets a big chunk of the funding. Maybe we could allocate a certain percentage of the available GIT funding to those strategies that are falling behind. The focus is so strongly on water quality that it seems like the natural resources goals and outcomes just don't fall out on the priority list and are not getting funded as often.
 - Christine Conn: Each year the GIT funding is tweaked in an effort to be more equitable in terms of what projects get funded. There is a lot of focus placed on outcomes that need more of a lift than others.
- Kristin Saunders: Part of what we are designing Day 2 (of the SRS meeting) to result in is everyone owning the outcomes and making personal commitments to advance on positive actions to adjust the trajectories on some of these.
- Chris Guy: This is clearly demonstrating the need for Chesapeake WILD.
- Scott Phillips: I don't think GIT funding is a solution to the problems we are talking about. We need to better coordinate federal, state, and local efforts for habitat restoration. There is opportunity for the MB to better utilize connections with the habitat restoration programs in the state and other federal agencies. This won't be done by EPA because they are focused on water quality.
- Steve Faulkner: There is not enough resources on the landscape in brook trout. It's not just collecting better data, there is also a fundamental imbalance between the size of the threat and the response.
- Kevin DuBois: I think the issue clearly demonstrates the need for integrating social science in everything we do. We cannot buy enough or spend enough to meet the goals. Without a broad public constituency for Chesapeake Bay protection and restoration (through behavior change), I fear we will not succeed.
- Brooke Landry: We just completed a Community-based Social Marketing project in collaboration with the Communications Workgroup. It was a really interesting learning experience. I'm presenting an overview and the results of the project to STAR in June if anyone's interested.

Break

Climate Change Funding Under the New Federal Administration

Jake Glass (OMB)

Jake has requested that notes not be included for his session. Please reach out to him directly with any questions at Jacob.S.Glass@omb.eop.gov.

[EO 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad](#)

[American Rescue Plan](#)

[American Jobs Plan](#)

DEIJ Action Team Draft Action Plan

Bo Williams (EPA)

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Bo Williams with any questions: Williams.James@epa.gov

Questions/comments:

- Bill Jenkins: One of the big things that folks are wondering is how do we start? Will there be any training and assistance?
 - Bo: The Diversity Workgroup will help provide support. This will be rolled out over the next several years through SRS process, it is not expected for all the GITs and WGs to implement this immediately.
 - Tuana Phillips: If you all have any specific ideas/thoughts on what tools/resources/trainings would be helpful, please let us know.
 - We are also trying to compile resources on our website page here:
https://chesapeakebay.net/who/group/diversity_workgroup
- Kristin Saunders: How does the goal team feel about engaging in this work? I want to spur some thinking on the part of all the members. The Action Team and Diversity Workgroup are working together to better understand what the needs of the goal teams are, so we can provide resources (contacts in communities, trainings, GIS resources, etc.). If you can hone in on where you want to put some energy, we can bring some resources and advisors to this group and help you think through the next steps.

Goal Team Funding

Greg Allen (EPA)

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Greg Allen with any questions: allen.greg@epa.gov

Questions/comments:

- Denise Clearwater: It would be helpful to have GIT funded reports distributed as they are completed, plus store them in a central repository on the CBP website. Reports from other GITs may also be very useful as they affect habitat Outcomes e.g. watersheds, water quality.

- Brooke Landry: Completed projects can be found here: <https://cbtrust.org/grants/git/git-projects/>
- Pam Mason: What about a GIT project forum?
 - Greg Allen: We have considered this and it's a great idea to hear the results of all the projects that have been completed, since our annual cycle focuses on new projects.

Discussion and Final Thoughts

Facilitated by Co-chairs Bill Jenkins (EPA) and Christine Conn (MD DNR)

DAY 2: Wednesday, May 5th 9 am – 12:15 pm

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| Bill Jenkins | Christine Conn | Chris Guy | Megan Ossmann |
| Laura Cattell Noll | Todd Lutte | Steve Strano | Alison Santoro |
| Kristin Saunders | Gina Hunt | Mary Andrews | Brooke Landry |
| BeKura Shabazz | Renee Thompson | Clint Morgeson | Jeff Trollinger |
| Angie Sowers | Steve Faulkner | Briana Yancy | Pam Mason |
| Joel Carr | Julie Reichert-Nguyen | Jennifer Starr | David Maginnes |
| Paige Hobaugh | Caitlin Glagola | Gwen Brewer | Scott Phillips |
| Denise Clearwater | Kevin Du Bois | Dan Murphy | Dan Goetz |
| Su Fanok | | | |

Welcome Back and Recap of Day 1

Bill Jenkins (EPA) and Christine Conn (MD DNR)

- Theme of the day is updates on projects and resources within the workgroups and the GIT, and examples of on-the-ground collaboration

Lighting Round Science Talks

- 1) The Healthy Watersheds Assessment – *Renee Thompson (USGS)*

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Renee Thompson with questions: rthompson@chesapeakebay.net

Questions/comments:

- Christine Conn: On the MD project, when you go to ICPRB – they have prioritization for source water drinking at the parcel scale. It might be interesting to see their approach.
 - Renee Thompson: The issue we're having is we need something that has wall to wall coverage for the state. Bill Williams, who's actually in our office now, at the Bay

Program has also done some work at the national scale and he has shared the methodology and work that they've done, which I think is actually quite similar to the assessment that MD did. We're working on taking the Maryland data and applying the EPA methodology, sort of similar to what we did with the HWA to really bring in that source water protection piece.

- Brooke Landry: Are you planning to use SAV in the index at all? SAV has been shown to respond to watershed impacts.
 - Renee: That is a great idea and we should probably talk about that. We definitely lose the nuance in the metrics when we reach the water and tidal areas, and I think there's a great opportunity to better incorporate what's going on in the water with regard to SAV.
- Scott Phillips: Between this and the Chesapeake Conservation Atlas, will there be opportunities to help focus where you want to restore and protect habitat?
 - Renee: The Conservation Atlas is really helpful and at a watershed-wide scale, once we update that assessment with the high-resolution land use/land cover data, it can be applicable as a stand in for where we prioritize protection and also important for the habitat piece. We need to get the CCP data updated so it can be applied. We're using what MD uses to delineate the high-value habitat areas, but I think there's an opportunity to create another section to have overlays, or layers that we've identified as the "heavy hitters" in terms of cross-outcome coordination.
- Su Fanok: What's the timing for this effort for MD? And do you plan to move this assessment to PA?
 - Renee: There is PA data available at the watershed-wide scale. Our plan is to work with TetraTech to develop the code that is the model of the HWA, to pull individual datasets and transforming them for use in the assessment and running the metrics. For MD, we have prototyped this, so when we update the regional assessment, we can bring in the new data and use the MD code or give guidance to PA on what data they would use. The MD assessment will be done at the end of this year and then we will work to expand.
 - Renee: <https://gis.chesapeakebay.net/healthywatersheds/assessment/>
- Gina Hunt: In response to Brooke's question, I think it would be great to connect you with NOAA on the fish habitat assessment. There is a tidal component and that assessment does include biological data (fish). So, this is an in-water assessment.
 - Renee: That's sort of where I was going – is there a way we can make the fish piece a component to better show the connection between landscape and water to improve management across that network? Overdue for that conversation.
- Steve Faulkner: We need a broader discussion on the coordination with the fish habitat assessment. I'm not sure I understand how we would use SAV as a healthy watershed metric, but it is certainly a component of the fish habitat assessment.

2) Wetland Fact Sheets and Communication Tools – *Kevin DuBois*

[Link to fact sheet](#)

Contact Kevin Du Bois with questions: kevin.dubois@navy.mil

Questions/comments:

- Scott Phillips: I just want to point out, that for this item and others, that we should consider bringing to the MB for input vs. approval because things can get stuck if we ask for approval.
 - Kevin: DuBois: I'm not sure what the appropriate process is for putting this kind of information out, so thank you for that feedback.
- Renee: It would be great to include cross-outcome connections or some examples related to resilience, land use change and conservation/restoration efforts (cross goal/outcome connections).
- Kevin DuBois: It is our intent to have one fact sheet for each jurisdiction. We are looking for champions for each jurisdiction to help identify the jurisdiction plans and initiatives that rely on or tout the value of wetland protection and restoration. We also need knowledgeable folks from each jurisdiction to help us target the most effective use of the information and communication strategy.
- Neely Law: How will this be distributed?
 - Kevin DuBois: In VA, we would like to send the fact sheet to all the wetlands boards who make regulatory decisions on projects that can impact wetlands. We would also send it to environmental NGOs and distribute it at public information events. Jake Solyst with the communications team is developing a plan as we speak.
- Alison Santoro: What is the expected timeline for distribution?
 - Kevin DuBois: The WWG considers the VA fact sheet final so if there is no additional input from the MB, I think we are ready to distribute it immediately.

3) Synthesis of Predicted Climate Impacts on Brook Trout – *Steve Faulkner (USGS)*
[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Steve with questions: faulkners@usgs.gov

Questions/comments:

- Denise Clearwater: Are there variations in temperature tolerance, seeing how far south the range was for brook trout?
 - Steve: Yes, there is both variation in populations within a region as well as the southern and northern ranges.
 - Steve: We are just beginning to understand what to look for, e.g. heat-shock proteins, genomic markers and then need more sampling across the range to quantify the variation

4) Assessing the risks to coastal habitats, DOI lands, and migratory waterbirds - *Joel Carr (USGS)*
[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Joel with questions: jcarr@usgs.gov

Questions/comments:

- Scott Phillips: Theme 2 refers to the USGS Chesapeake Science Strategy. The USGS has four science themes based on the needs of the CBP Watershed Agreement and USGS capabilities. The work discussed by Renee, Steve, and Joel are part of the USGS science efforts. Here is a bit more on themes and relation to CBP outcomes: <https://usgs.gov/centers/cba/usgs-chesapeake-bay-highlights-fy2020>
- Gina Hunt: What are the 2 areas you mentioned?
 - Joel: The second area is being decided, but likely near Deal Island.
- Pam Mason: Are you familiar with SCHISM?
 - Joel: Yes, we are trying to use some of the outputs of this model to use as inputs into the finer scale models.
- Brooke Landry: I would like to talk to you about your project sometime soon. STAR and the SAV workgroup are just starting a project looking at climate impacts on SAV and we'd love your input.
- Becky Golden: We are doing a similar assessment on SAV and marshes through NOAA's Ecological Effects of Sea Level Rise project. Lots of potential crossovers!
 - Joel Car: VCR-LTER is also working on coupled ecosystems (seagrass-marsh). Lots of potential.

Collaboration in Restoration and Conservation

- 1) Resources for Collaboration and Synthesis at the Bay Program – *Kristin Saunders (UMCES)*

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Kristin with any questions: ksaunders@umces.edu

Questions/comments:

- Angie Sowers: Update - the comp plan has been approved by ASA(CW) and sent to OMB and on its way to Congress
 - NFWF was the non-federal sponsor for the Comp plan
- Neely Law: What was the funding resource on the first slide?
 - The Chesapeake Bay Recovery and Accountability Act (CBARA) reporting. It shows how much federal and state money is going toward the restoration effort, and gives you a sense of which agencies and what levels of funding are going toward the restoration effort so you can follow the money, and hopefully access it in ways you not have realized you can.
- Scott Phillips: For the monitoring improvement effort, I encourage the Habitat Goal Team to really advocate for enhanced monitoring to meet your needs. There are some partners who want to focus improvements toward water-quality monitoring.
 - Steve Faulkner: I was wondering how we connect the deficiencies we've identified with brook trout, wetlands a la Living Resource analyst with this STAR monitoring effort

- Scott: At each monthly STAR meeting there will be updates/discussion of improving the monitoring networks. Having the HGIT needs brought up by coordinator/staffer at these sessions is the best approach. Also reaching out directly to Peter Tango (CBP monitoring coordinator) is worthwhile. The STAR webpage has additional information:

https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/group/scientific_and_technical_analysis_and_reporting

2) Halfmoon Creek Watershed Restoration – *Caitlin Glagola (Chesapeake Bay Foundation)*

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Caitlin Glagola with any questions: cglagola@cbf.org

Questions/comments:

- Caitlin Glagola: We began engaging out partners in December 2018, and our last partner meeting was February 2020. Our draft watershed implementation plan was completed in Spring 2020 and then submitted to DEP for approval shortly after that. So, engagement and plan development was about 1.5 years, and about 2 years for final project completion.

3) The Delmarva Conservation and Restoration Network – *Dan Murphy (USFWS)*

[Presentation slides](#)

Contact Dan Murphy with questions: dan_murphy@fws.gov

No questions/comments.

Facilitated discussion on resources for collaboration and synthesis in restoration and conservation

Kristin Saunders (UMCES)

- Kristin: Let's discuss something you heard over the past two days that inspired you (tools, success stories, etc.) or if there's anything you'd like to get a better understanding of.
 - Bill Jenkins: This idea of creating networks and partnerships adds a lot to everyone's plate. But Caitlin's and Dan's work are great examples of how this is a lot of up-front work, but once it is in place it makes things a lot easier. It multiplies the effect that just one organization would have in the field in terms of restoration, or protection, or monitoring.
 - Chris Guy: I think in the end, it saves a lot of time, money, and effort. I like to work in partnerships because I often have preconceived notions about how things should go, but through the collaborative process I start to see things a different way. The more I get the opportunity to explore the DEI aspects of my job, the more I see that my narrow focus is not absolute.
 - Christine Conn: I'll just add on that the HGIT and Healthy Watersheds are diving deep into the concept of technical service providers. As I've gone through this workshop and I started

learning more, the discussion became about not only where, but how. We need to understand what makes these networks succeed – what resources do they need?

- Jennifer Starr: The Local Government Advisory Committee will be holding a Local Government Forum on Developing Collaborative Watershed Partnerships to develop recommendations for addressing some of the barriers to collaboration efforts with local decision makers. It's June 3rd and please let me know if you are interested in being part of this as subject matter experts (jstarr@allianceforthebay.com)
- Scott Phillips: The interaction between stakeholders and information providers takes work through the entire process of planning and not just at the beginning. This additional work helps ensure better conservation so it should just be considered standard practice for future efforts.
 - Kristin Saunders: As we embrace the DEIJ goals, the relationships with the people who have not been at the table are especially important and will take additional investment.
- Pam Mason: I think we need to consider costs and funding for collaboration. Much like the trajectory of monitoring networks. Recently, NFWF, among other funders, has been willing to put money into supporting people's time and effort to collaborate. STAC workshops cover the cost of participants to attend. The James River Association now has a living shorelines collaborative that is putting money into creating the network. On the flip side, when we call people stakeholders rather than collaborators, then they may think they are providing their time for free and there is a limit to how much time people have.
 - Kristin Saunders: The Diversity WG has education us on the need to compensate people for their time if this isn't their day job. EPA and other grantee organizations are beginning to explore ways to tackle that, because it is a barrier.
- Chris Guy: Collaborative efforts among agencies toward a common goal are really messy due to different missions and perspectives that may conflict.
 - Scott Phillips: Building on to what Chris is saying - conflict resolution is an important part of collaboration.
- Gina Hunt: I loved hearing about the Delmarva project - I wish we had the fish habitat assessment back when they started this. I would love to hear what species/factors the workshop survey identified. I would love to speak with Dan further.
- BeKura Shabazz: I agree and for me I would feel like my labor is appreciated and supported, especially being marginalized, and impacted.
 - I am trained in conflict resolution and I am a certified mediator.
 - Bekura Shabazz: How can the work be better supported through the people who are doing it but not getting paid to show up?
- Steve Faulkner: The decision analysis/SDM Dan Murphy mentioned is more than just conflict resolution, but how to evaluate tradeoffs which is important as the catchment/watershed size increases.
- Scott Phillips: It would be nice to take another look at some of the newer tools we heard about today and see how we could bring them together to target for multiple purposes.
 - Kristin: Perhaps the GIT would be interested in a working session with the GIS experts to play around with mapping and using these tools.

- Scott Phillips: I would suggest we expand this beyond the HGIT to the WQGIT, etc. to work better together.
- Neely Law: I'm excited to follow through on this idea. The SHWG has had a lot of meetings with Renee and the HWGIT because we see a lot of value in the HWA. We are attempting to identify ways to assess a trajectory of stream health rather than the biological end point, specific to how we track restoration impacts and their effects on stream health. This is going to be a key element in the development of our two-year workplan. All of the data and resources we heard today is overwhelming, so having some resources to help develop a process and navigate these tools would be helpful.
- Kristin Saunders: The Chesapeake Conservancy has a contract to support the work on cross-goal team mapping and they are doing a user survey trying to get a sense of how to best present this data (online portal, etc.). So we want to eventually end up being a little more user friendly, but if a work session with how to use that stuff would be helpful, I can certainly work with Chris and Christine and Bill to tee up that opportunity.
- Kevin DuBois: To Scott's point, we try to promote natural resource projects with a water quality co-benefit (and vice versa) as a wise use of limited resources (staff capacity, \$\$, land etc.). And those that provide a climate resilience benefit too.
- Brooke Landry: One thing we've been working on is shallow water use conflicts. It's morphing into a discussion, as Steve mentioned above, of evaluating trade-offs. But going back to time and capacity, I haven't had time to continue the conversation but need to. Just an example of collaboration needs and lack of time to approach it.
- Steve Faulkner: Our real challenge with brook trout is resources and people to do this work. We spread ourselves thin with some the activities that fall on the shoulders of the workgroup chairs, so I just wanted to raise this point with the co-chairs as a problem we need to address.
- Chris Guy: FWS regional offices are hiring people with advanced degrees in Structured Decision-Making Process. It is becoming a science in its own right.
 - Scott Phillips: USGS has an entire group at Patuxent in structured decision making and we can use them to help us out.
 - Steve Faulkner: USGS has an SDM/DA group at the Eastern Ecological Science Center

Final Thoughts

- Bill Jenkins: Feel free to reach out to Chris, Christine, Megan, Briana, and I with your thoughts going forward.
- Chris Guy: Megan will share the HGIT action plan with the group. As you review it and think about our conversations over the past few days, please provide any input you may have.

Adjourn